

Schiphol Group

Company Details

Schiphol Group is a group of companies whose primary responsibility is management and development of AirportCities. Schiphol Group's showcase is Amsterdam Airport Schiphol, the fourth largest airport in Europe and the Netherlands' main international hub. In Schiphol Group's vision, an airport is much more than runways and a terminal. The AirportCity provides services and facilities for passengers, visitors, companies and staff alike. In 2003, it was able to increase post-tax profits by 7.8 per cent to 191 million despite a fall in passenger numbers resulting from global economic factors.

Industry

- Aviation

Business Challenges

- Offer the best services and facilities to all target groups using Schiphol Airport.
- Implement a new core information system that will provide the availability and flexibility needed to operate in a highly dynamic environment.
- Achieve integration between this system and other systems that are based on a wide range of platforms, operating systems and protocols.

"When working in an airport environment, the ability to react at short notice is one of the most important issues. Whenever there is a change in any of our partners' systems, we have to accommodate this change as quickly as we can. Thanks to SeeBeyond, we can do so."

Wim Sijstermans, CIO, Schiphol Group

Business Challenges

Over the past few years, the world of aviation has experienced difficulties. Schiphol Airport has been no exception to this trend, with numbers of passengers and flight services falling by some 2 per cent between 2002 and 2003. However, a more optimistic attitude now prevails, and Schiphol Group is determined to move forward by providing airlines, passengers and other target groups with the best possible services and facilities.

For many years, Schiphol Group's operations have been based around a core system known as Central Information System Schiphol (CISS). Because these operations are so diverse, CISS needs to be linked with a variety of other systems, most of which belong to airlines and other partners. Recently, the group's central IT unit began to search for a new system that was future-proofed and more flexible than its predecessor. This was necessary because although the existing version of CISS had worked well for many years, it's hardware and software platforms would not be supported in the future.

One of the main requirements for the new system, CISS 3, was the ability to integrate much more flexibly with other systems that were based on a wide variety of platforms, operating systems and protocols. In some cases, these systems were very old and were themselves likely to be replaced before long.

Solution Overview

Schiphol Group decided to base CISS 3 on Software AG's Tamino XML Server data management system. Based on a combination of ease-of-use and technical support, the group then chose BEA Weblogic as the application server and SeeBeyond eGate Integrator as its integration architecture.

"In order to support a rapid implementation, we needed a state-of-the-art integration architecture that was not unduly complicated," explained CIO Wim Sijstermans. "We also knew that we would require assistance during and after the development of the system, so the quality of support available from the supplier was another key decision factor. SeeBeyond met our requirements."

Technical specialists from SeeBeyond's Dutch office helped with interface development. SeeBeyond also trained Schiphol Group in the

operation and maintenance of eGate Integrator. According to Sijstermans, the support received was excellent.

With SeeBeyond's help, Sijstermans and his colleagues were able to integrate CISS 3 with a total of 38 internal and external systems, This enables some 2 million messages a day to be automatically routed to and from the right systems in the right format using eGate Integrator as a message broker. During the implementation, there was no disruption whatsoever to the smooth running of these systems. Indeed, Sijstermans claims that Schiphol Group's partners were completely unaware of any change.

"Several people contacted us to ask when switchover to the new system would occur. They were surprised to discover that it had already been up-and-running for weeks," he said.

Business Benefits

Unlike its predecessor system, CISS 3 is platform independent. This means that the impact of any future changes in Schiphol Group's IT infrastructure will be minimised.

The use of eGate Integrator has introduced additional flexibility to deal with future changes. This flexibility became clear during the implementation. For example, Schiphol Group was able to meet an airline handler's request for a different interface within three weeks, less than half the estimated time.

These advantages enable Schiphol Group to develop its business in new directions without having to treat integration as a major challenge. The group can also be more responsive to the needs of airlines and passengers, who are its main customers. If an airline upgrades its systems, for example, or there is a change in communication requirements as a result of new alliance, CISS 3 must support the new scenario.

Plans for the Future

To date, the integration effort has focused mainly on external systems. However, Sijstermans believes that eGate Integrator can also act as a strategic platform for the integration of further internal systems. With more than 200 such systems in use within the airport, there is enormous scope for achieving business benefits in different areas of the group's operations.

"In order to support a rapid implementation, we needed a state-of-the-art integration architecture that was not unduly complicated. The quality of support available from the supplier was another key decision factor. SeeBeyond met our requirements in a very professional way"

Wim Sijstermans, CIO, Schiphol Group

Solution Overview

- Base the new information system, CISS 3, on Software AG's Tamino XML Server data management platform, the BEA Weblogic application server of BEA systems with SeeBeyond's eGate Integrator as the integration architecture.
- Engage SeeBeyond to help with interface development and ongoing system support.
- Integrate CISS 3 with a total of 38 internal and external systems.

Business Benefits

- The platform-independence of the CISS 3 system will minimise the impact of future changes to Schiphol's IT infrastructure.
- The use of eGate Integrator has introduced additional flexibility whilst at the same time cutting the time required to modify interfaces.
- Schiphol Group is more responsive to the needs of airlines and other organisations using the airport.

Technology Profile

SeeBeyond Components
 • eGate™ Integrator

Integrations

- 38 specialist systems developed by Schiphol Group and its partners

Sizing

- 2 million messages per day

Hardware

- IBM eServer pSeries 670

OS

- IBM AIX